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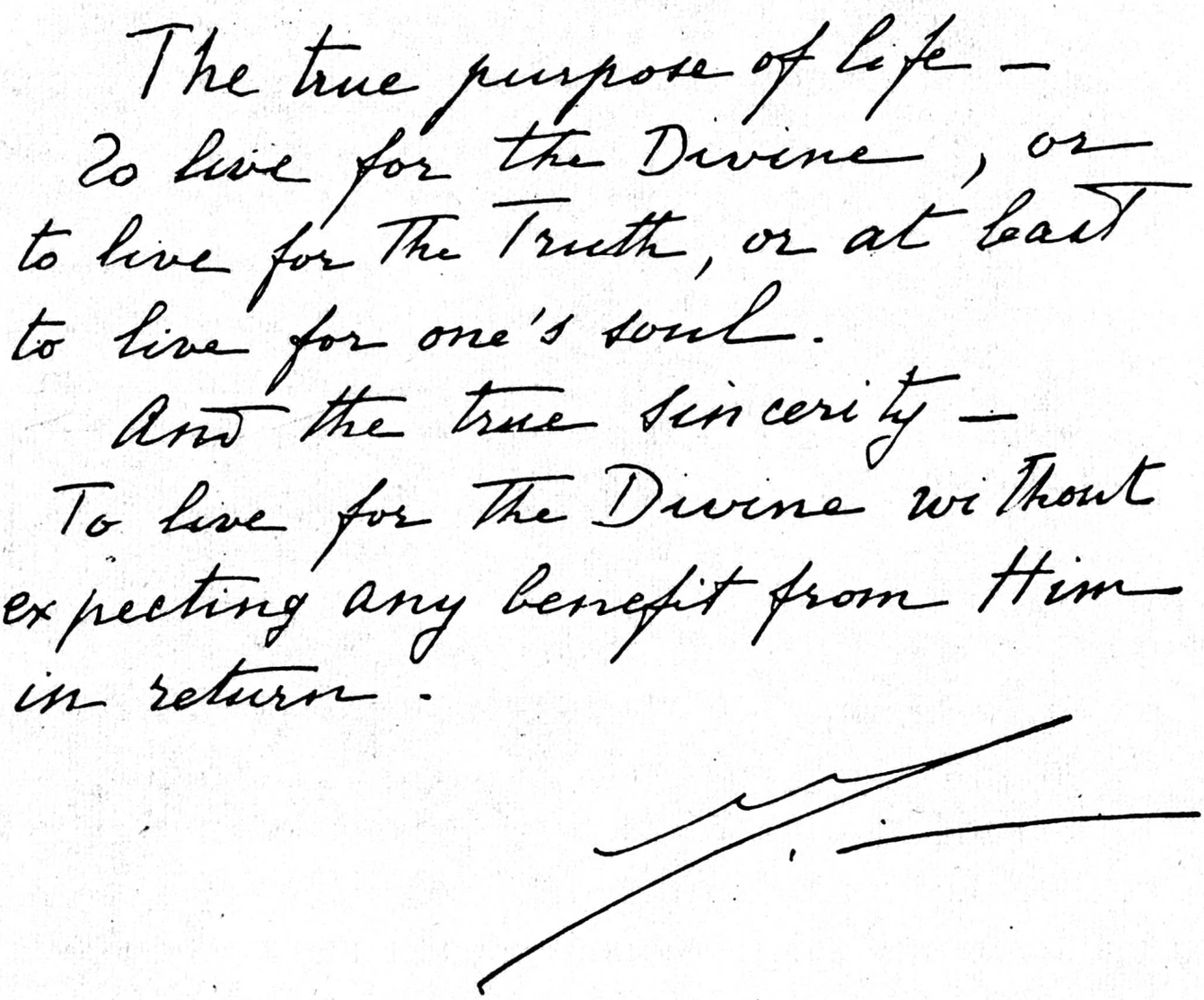
THE MOTHER

The True Purpose of Life and the True Sincerity


The true purpose of life —
to live for the Divine, or
to live for the Truth, or at least
to live for one's soul.
And the true sincerity —
To live for the Divine without
expecting any benefit from Him
in return.

20-1-64

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The Mother

20-1-64

Painting by F. C. Hsu

How are we to establish a stable peace and silence in the mind?

First you have to will, and then you have to try, and go on trying. There are many methods. Here is one. Sit down and, instead of thinking of fifty things, say to yourself, "Peace, peace, peace". Imagine the calmness and silence. Don't look at the thoughts, don't listen to their noise. How do you act when somebody annoys you very much and you want to get rid of him? You simply refuse to listen, you turn your head away and think of other things. Treat your thoughts in the same manner.

Snatch opportunities again and again to sit down and create the spell of 'Peace'. Do it as soon as you wake in the morning and when you go to bed in the evening. It will have a good effect on your health also. Do it a few minutes before eating. You will be surprised how much it helps you to digest your food.

If you continue long enough, peace will not have to enter into your head; whatever you do, whatever the circumstances, it will always be there. But this takes years. In the beginning keep up the peace-formula for two or three minutes — in a very simple way. When a practice is complicated one has to make efforts, and to make efforts is to stop being tranquil. How do you call an intimate friend to yourself? A mere effortless word and there he is beside you. Just so, you have to make peace your friend and call it.

THE MOTHER

The Real Difficulty

The real difficulty is always in ourselves, not in our surroundings. There are three things necessary in order to make men invincible, Will, Disinterestedness and Faith. We may have a will to emancipate ourselves, but sufficient faith may be lacking. We may have a faith in our ultimate emancipation, but the will to use the necessary means may be wanting. And even if there are will and faith, we may use them with a violent attachment to the fruit of our work or with passions of hatred, blind excitement or hasty forcefulness which may produce evil reactions. For this reason it is necessary, in a work of such magnitude, to have resort to a higher Power than that of mind and body in order to overcome unprecedented obstacles. This is the need of *sādhanā*.

God is within us, an Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient Power; we and He are of one nature and, if we get into touch with Him and put ourselves in His hands, He will pour into us His own force and we shall realise that we too have our share of godhead, our portion of omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience. The path is long, but self-surrender makes it short; the way is difficult, but perfect trust makes it easy.

Will is omnipotent, but it must be divine will, selfless, tranquil, at ease about results. "If you had faith

even as a grain of mustard-seed," said Jesus, "you would say to this mountain, Come, and it would come to you." What was meant by the word Faith, was really Will accompanied with perfect *śraddhā*. *Śraddhā* does not reason, it knows; for it commands sight and sees what God wills, and it knows that what is God's will, must happen. *Śraddhā*, not blind but using sight spiritual, can become omniscient.

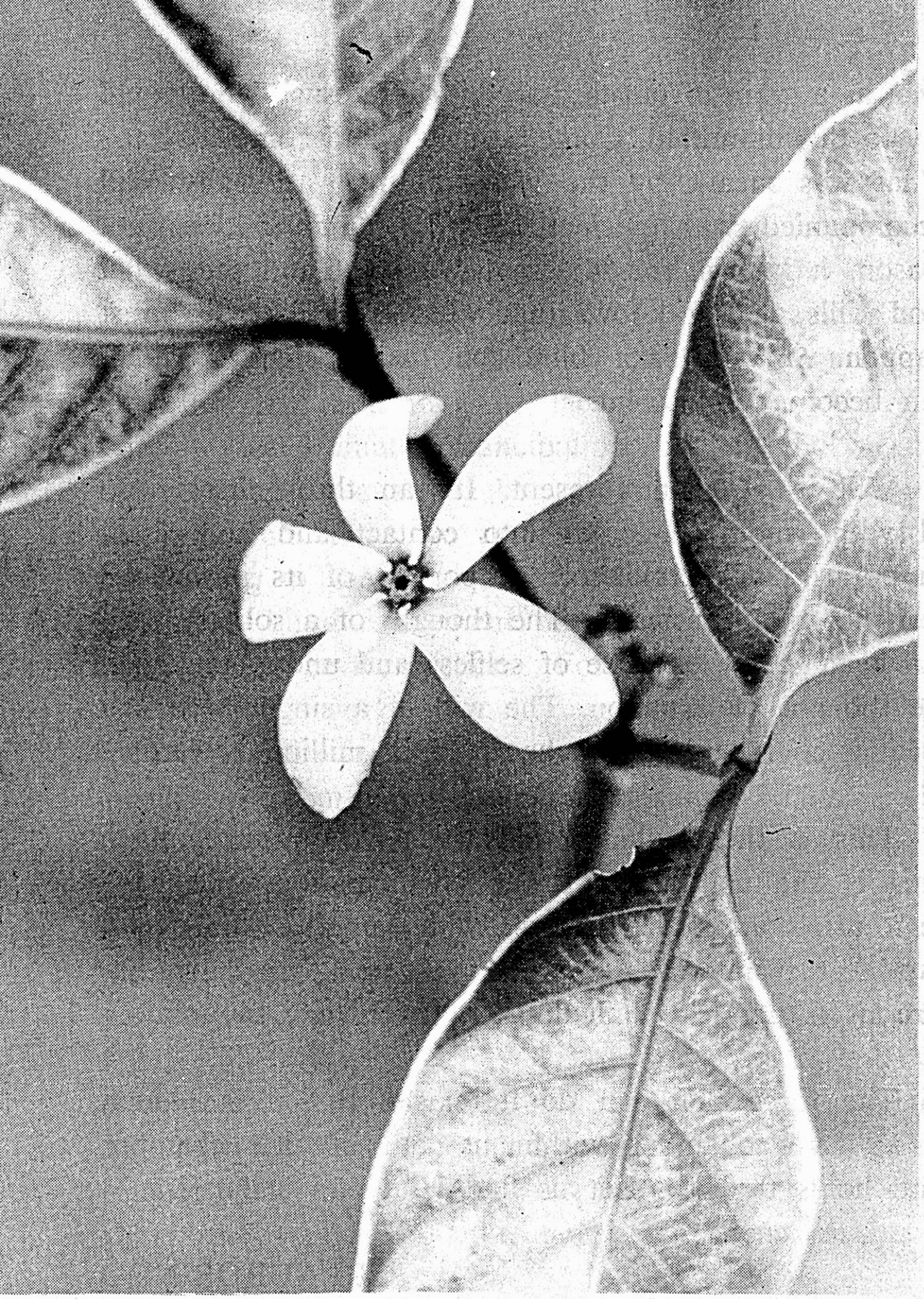
Will is also omnipresent. It can throw itself into all with whom it comes into contact and give them temporarily or permanently a portion of its power, its thought, its enthusiasms. The thought of a solitary man can become, by exercise of selfless and undoubting will, the thought of a nation. The will of a single hero can breathe courage into the hearts of a million cowards.

This is the Sadhana that we have to accomplish. This is the condition of our emancipation. We have been using an imperfect will with imperfect faith and imperfect disinterestedness. Yet the task we have before us is not less difficult than to move a mountain.

The force that can do it, exists. But it is hidden in a secret chamber within us and of that chamber God holds the key. Let us find Him and claim it.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed. Vol. 17, pp. 178-79)



DETERMINATION — Knows what it wants and does it.

(*The name given by the Mother*)

These star-shaped flowers are light pink in colour with deep rose-pink centre. They have rounded petals and narrow corolla tube. Botanical name: Kopsia fruiticosa.

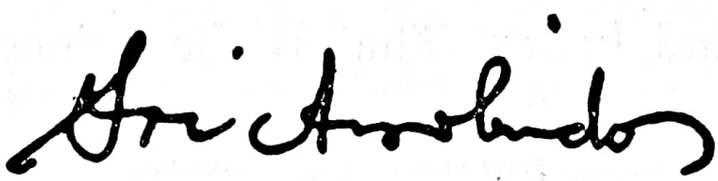
Yoga in Everyday Life

Think of your work only when it is being done, not before and not after.

Do not let your mind go back on a work that is finished. It belongs to the past and all re-handling of it is a waste of power.

Do not let your mind labour in anticipation on a work that has to be done. The Power that acts in you will see to it at its own time.

These two habits of the mind belong to a past functioning that the transforming Force is pressing to remove and the physical mind's persistence in them is the cause of your strain and fatigue. If you can remember to let your mind work only when its action is needed, the strain will lessen and disappear. This is indeed the transitional movement before the supramental working takes possession of the physical mind and brings into it the spontaneous action of the Light.



(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed. Vol. 23, p. 705)

The First Step in Self-perfection

"...The first step in the work of self-perfection is to become conscious of oneself."

This means to be conscious of one's inner truth, conscious of the different parts of one's being and of their respective working. One must know why one does this, why one does that; one must know one's thoughts, know one's feelings, know all one's activities, all one's movements, what one is capable of etc. And to know oneself is not sufficient; this knowing must lead to conscious control. To know oneself perfectly means to control oneself perfectly.

But one must have an aspiration every moment of one's life.

It is never too soon to begin, never too late to continue. That is to say, even when you are quite young, you can begin to study yourself and to know yourself and little by little to control yourself. And even when you are what people call "old", when old many many years, it is not too late to make the effort to know yourself better and better and to control yourself better and better. That is the Science of living.

To perfect yourself, you must first of all become conscious of yourself. I am sure, for example, that the following incident must have happened to you many times in your life. All on a sudden someone asks you, "Why have you done that ?" Well, the spontaneous an-

swer is, "I do not know". If someone asks you, "What are you thinking about?" You answer, "I do not know". "Why are you tired?" — "I do not know". "Why are you glad?" — "I do not know", and so on. I may take indeed some fifty persons and ask them all on a sudden without preparation, "Why have you done that?", and if they are not "awake" within, all will reply, "I do not know" (naturally, I do not speak of those who have undergone a discipline for knowing themselves and for following their movements to the extreme limit; they of course can collect themselves and concentrate and give the right answer, but only after a time). You will see that it is like that, if you look at your whole day. You say something and you do not know why you say so — it is only when the words have gone out of your mouth that you perceive that it was not quite what you wanted to say. For example you go to see someone, you prepare in advance the words you are going to say, but once before the person in question, you say nothing or it is other words that come out of your mouth. Are you able to say to what extent the atmosphere of the other person has influenced you and prevented you from saying what you had prepared? How many people are able to say that? They do not perceive even that the person was in such or such a state and that was why they could not tell him what they had prepared. Naturally there are obvious cases when you find people in such bad humour that you can ask them nothing. I do not speak of that. I speak of a clear perception of mutual influences, what acts and reacts upon your nature — it is

this that one has not. For example, you are suddenly uneasy or happy, but how many people can say, "It is that"? And it is difficult to know, it is not at all easy. One must be "awake" very much; one must be constantly in a state to observe with great attention.

There are people who sleep twelve hours daily and say the rest of the time, "I am awake"! There are people who sleep twenty hours per day and the rest of the time half awake!

To be in this state in which you observe attentively you must have, so to say, antennae everywhere that are in constant contact with your centre of true consciousness. You record everything, you organise everything and, in this way, you cannot be taken unaware, you cannot be deceived, mistaken and you cannot say any other thing than what you wanted to say. But how many people live in this state normally? That is what I mean to say exactly when I speak of "becoming conscious". If you want to derive the greatest profit out of the conditions and circumstances in which you find yourself, you must be fully awake; you must not be taken by surprise. You must not do things without knowing why, you must not say things without knowing why. One must be constantly awake.

You must understand also that you are not separate individualities, and that life is a ceaseless exchange of forces, of consciousness, of vibrations and of movements of all kinds. It is as in a crowd; where everyone pushes, everyone goes forward, and when all go

backward, everyone goes backward. It is the same thing in the inner world, in your consciousness. Constantly there are forces and influences that act and react upon you, it is like a gas in the atmosphere, and unless you are quite awake, these things enter into you and only when they have entered well into you and come out as if they were from you, that you are aware of them. How often do men meet people who are nervous, in anger or in bad mood and become themselves nervous, full of anger and bad mood, like that, without knowing why. How is it that when you play against some persons you play very well, and when you play against others you are unable to play? And people who are quiet, not wicked, who suddenly become furious when they are in the midst of a furious crowd? And one does not know who started the thing; it is a thing that passed by and swept the consciousness. There are people who can let out vibrations like that and others respond without knowing why. Everything is like that, from the smallest to the biggest.

To be individualised in a collectivity, one must be absolutely conscious of oneself. And of what self? The Self above all mixture, that is to say, what I call the Truth of your being. And so long as you are not conscious of the Truth of your being, you are moved by all sorts of things without being aware of it at all. Collective thought, collective suggestion is a formidable influence, acting constantly on individual thought. And what is extraordinary is that one is not aware of it. You think that you are thinking *like that*, but in rea-

lity it is the collectivity that thinks like that. The mass is always inferior to the individual. Take individuals of like category, well, when they are alone, they are at least two degrees higher than people of the same category that are in a crowd. There is a mixture of things obscure and unconscious and you slip inevitably into the unconscious. To escape from that, there is only one means; to become conscious of oneself, more and more conscious and more and more attentive.

Try to do this little exercise: at the beginning of the day, say, "I will not speak without thinking of what I say". You believe, do you not, that you think all that you say ! It is not at all the case, you will see that so many times the word you do not want to say is ready to come out, but you are obliged to make a conscious effort to stop it from coming out.

I knew people who were very scrupulous in not telling a lie, but when directly they are in a group instead of saying the truth they tell a lie spontaneously. They did not intend to do so, but it came "like that". Why ? Because they were in the company of liars: there was an atmosphere of falsehood and they simply caught the malady !

It is in this way that little by little, slowly, with perseverance, first of all with great care and attention, one becomes conscious, learns to know oneself and afterwards to become master of oneself.

THE MOTHER

(*Bulletin*, 1964 February, pp. 45-51)

Reasons for Bad Thoughts

Do people have bad thoughts, because they have no mastery over their mind ?

There may be many reasons, indeed there are many reasons. It may be the result of a bad nature. If these people themselves have ugly feelings, these ugly feelings may be the cause of the ugly thoughts. Or it is the contrary: perhaps they are open to all kinds of suggestions coming from outside: these suggestions enter into them and gradually produce bad feelings and then they get into a struggle, precisely because they are not master of themselves. When these influences rise to the surface, instead of controlling them and refusing those that are undesirable, people allow them all to enter as they like; the doors are wide open.

You are bathing in all kinds of things, good, bad, indifferent, luminous, dark, all that is there, but the consciousness of each should act as a filter. You must receive nothing that you do not want to receive, you must think nothing that you do not want to think, and above all you must not allow the thoughts to change into feelings and actions without a formal sanction.

After all, that is the fundamental reason for physical existence. Each person is an instrument for controlling a certain set of vibrations which represents his own field of work, each one should receive only those that conform to the divine plan and refuse the rest.

But there is not one in a thousand who does that. One does a little of it more or less consciously by the friction and pressure of circumstances and the environment, but as for doing it voluntarily, certainly there are very few people who are capable of it. And it is not sufficient to do it voluntarily, you must do it in the right way and with the true consciousness, which is still more exceptional.

Control over one's thought! Who has control over his thoughts? Only he who has trained himself to that, who has endeavoured for it from his very childhood.

The entire scale is there beginning from the total absence of control. And the immense majority of people are harassed by thoughts which they cannot get rid of and which possess them literally, nor have they the power to close the door of their active consciousness to these thoughts. It is the thoughts that govern them, dominate them, not they their thoughts. One hears everyday people complaining: "Oh, this thought is all the while coming to me again and again and I am unable to get rid of it". And then they are assailed by all sorts of things from anxiety to bad will, fear — thoughts that express fear are most harrassing; you try to send them away, they come back like rubber and fall upon you. Who is it that has control over his thought? It requires years of labour for that; it is such a great habit.

Next, to come to this thing which is not complete

control yet, but already a step in advance, namely, to be capable of removing all movements in the head, as if with the back of your hand you put aside the vibrations and the surface of the mind becomes smooth. Everything stops. It is like a book that opens on a white page... almost a material whiteness... white !

Try a little in yourself, you will see, it is very interesting.

Then one can follow in one's head the place where there is the small point that dances. I have seen Sri Aurobindo doing it in the head of someone, someone who was precisely complaining of being harassed by ideas. It was as if his hand came, seized the little dark point that was dancing, gently as one takes an insect between one's fingers and threw it away, and then, that's all, it is finished.... Everything became immobile, tranquil, luminous.

I have seen also a case when a person came to him with an acute pain somewhere: "Oh, I have a pain, I have a pain there !" He said nothing and kept silent, he was looking at the person. I saw, I saw some thing like a hand, a subtle physical hand that came, took hold of the little point that was dancing disorderly, took it and threw it away... and there, all went well. The person exclaimed; "Oh, but my pain is gone !"

THE MOTHER

(*Bulletin*, 1958 April, pp. 113-117)

Other Worlds

The physical is not the only world; there are others that we become aware of through dream records, through the subtle senses, through influences and contacts, through imagination, intuition and vision. There are worlds of a larger subtler life than ours, vital worlds; worlds in which Mind builds its own forms and figures, mental worlds; psychic worlds which are the soul's home; others above with which we have little contact. In each of us there is a mental plane of consciousness, a psychic, a vital, a subtle physical as well as the gross physical and material plane. The same planes are repeated in the consciousness of general Nature. It is when we enter or contact these other planes that we come into connection with the worlds above the physical. In sleep we leave the physical body, only a subconscient residue remaining, and enter all planes and all sorts of worlds. In each we see scenes, meet beings, share in happenings, come across formations, influences, suggestions which belong to these planes. Even when we are awake, part of us moves in these planes, but their activity goes on behind the veil; our waking minds are not aware of it. Dreams are often only incoherent constructions of our subconscient, but others are records (often much mixed and distorted) or transcripts of experiences in these supraphysical planes. When we do sadhana, this kind of dream becomes very common; then subconscious dreams cease to predominate.

The forces and beings of the vital world have a

great influence on human beings. The vital world is on one side a world of beauty, — the poet, artist, musician are in close contact with it; it is also a world of powers and passions, lusts and desires, — our own lusts and desires, and passions and ambitions can put us into connection with the vital worlds and their forces and beings. It is again a world of things dark, dangerous and horrible. Nightmares like X's are contacts with this side of the vital plane. Its influences are also the source of much in men that is demoniac, dirty, cruel and base. ... ...

If such an invasion is attempted, the one thing to do is to fight it out as she did and at the same time to call the Mother. The rule should be to call the Mother before sleeping, to concentrate on her and try to feel the Mother's protection around her and go with that into sleep. In the dream itself a habit of calling the Mother when in difficulty or peril should be formed; many sadhaks do it. Not to allow the invasion, any invasion of any power or being, whether in dream, meditation or otherwise — no force except the Divine Force, means to reject it, never to give assent, whether through attention or through weakness. To cut connection can be done by will within, a will of rejection, a concentration on higher things than the things of the vital plane; also by rejection of vital desires or despondencies and depressions, if she has them. Let her aspire most for the higher spiritual experiences, the psychic opening, calm, peace, purity, the opening to the higher light, strength, bliss, knowledge.

One thing, she should not lead too sequestered a life; some opening on the physical world is needed, also some normal mental activities of a healthy character.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed. Vol. 24, pp. 1499-1501)

Each man has his own personal consciousness entrenched in his body and gets into touch with his surroundings only through his body and senses and the mind using the senses.

Yet all the time the universal forces are pouring into him without his knowing it. He is aware only of thoughts, feelings, etc., that rise to the surface and these he takes for his own. Really they come from outside in mind waves, vital waves, waves of feeling and sensation, etc., which take particular form in him and rise to the surface after they have got inside.

But they do not get into his body at once. He carries about with him an environmental consciousness (called by the Theosophists the Aura) into which they first enter. If you can become conscious of this environmental self of yours, then you can catch the thought, passion, suggestion or force of illness and prevent it from entering into you. If things in you are thrown out, they often do not go altogether but take refuge in this environmental atmosphere and from there they try to get in again. Or they go to a distance outside but linger on the outskirts or even perhaps far off, waiting till they get an opportunity to attempt entrance.

The environmental is not a world — it is an individual thing.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed. Vol. 22, pp. 313-14)

On Dreams

...This is an instance of a dream of exact physical prevision. The power to have such dreams is comparatively rare, for ordinarily such previsions come in inner vision but not in sleep. In dreams vital or mental formations often take shape which sometimes fulfil themselves in essence, but not with this accuracy of detail.

It is only a particular class of dreams that do that [indicate the exact past and the future]. Most coherent dreams are either symbolic or indicate things that take place in the mental or vital planes rather than on the physical....

* *

These figures and intimations in dream may be due to three different causes —

1. Beings whom you meet in the supraphysical world and who interest themselves in you.

2. Forces of Nature, mind nature or vital nature, that take these human appearances and in a symbolic dream convey to you some formation of the universal Mind or Life. These messages can take the form of intimations or warnings of what is going to happen....

3. Constructions of your own mind in the form of dreams so as to convey to you intimations it had received or perceptions of some force of nature which, as in the last dream, it wanted the inner being to reject.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed. Vol. 24, p. 1489)

The Secret of his Conduct

A king, in days of yore, had once had an unusual dream. He saw an ugly wicked fox jumping up and down his beautiful palace. The king shrieked in disgust and woke up.

He narrated his dream to his ministers. But none of them could give him a satisfactory explanation of the dream. He narrated it to his courtiers. They too were confused.

Then all the people of the land were informed of the dream through heralds. Many people came forward to try to satisfy the king with their explanations. But the king was far from being satisfied. The explanations seemed to him either false or foolish.

He then announced that whoever gave him a convincing explanation of the dream, would be rewarded with a great deal of money.

Ivan, a poor young man, heard this announcement while he was on his way to his hut after a day's hard labour in the field. He sat down under a tree, sighed, and exclaimed, "How wonderful it would be if I knew the meaning of the dream ! I could become so rich ! But, alas, how vain are such thoughts !"

"Do you want to know the meaning of the dream ?" A sweet voice was heard asking him from the top of the tree. Ivan looked up and saw a beautiful, colourful, little bird sitting on a branch.

"O sweet little bird, why don't you tell me the meaning of the dream if you know it?" entreated Ivan.

The bird flapped its wings and hopping down to a lower branch, said, "I will tell you, if you promise to give me half of the reward which you would receive from the king."

Ivan readily agreed to share his reward with the bird. The bird then explained, "The fox jumping up and down the palace means that the atmosphere is full of deceit. The palace is the symbol of the kingdom and the fox is the symbol of the forces of deceit. The king should be very cautious in dealing with the officers as well as his subjects."

Ivan thanked the bird and started walking towards the palace. When he arrived there, it was evening. But the king still sat in his audience chamber, listening to the scholars, astrologers and priests who had come from far and near to help him understand his dream. But from the pensive look of the king, Ivan could guess that he was not at all happy with the learned visitors.

Ivan saluted the king and offered to explain the dream. He, however, wished to speak to the king privately.

The king asked all the courtiers and visitors to leave the chamber. After they left, Ivan told the king what he had learnt from the bird. The king was fully satisfied. Ivan was given a great amount of money. Besides, he was introduced to the ministers and courtiers by the king himself, as a very wise man. He was entertained to a royal banquet at night. In the morning

he took leave of the king and started for his village.

He was naturally very happy with the money he had received. But he felt sad at the thought of having to part with half of it. So he returned to his village by a different route, avoiding the bird. He built a fine house, got married, and lived happily. And so the years passed.

One day the king's messenger appeared before him and told him of another strange dream which the king had just had. The king had asked Ivan to meet him as soon as possible. Ivan promised to present himself in the palace the next morning.

This time the king had dreamed of a dazzling dagger swinging around his palace, particularly around the dome of the palace. Ivan reflected on the dream throughout the night. But no explanation occurred to him. In the morning, on his way to the palace, he approached the wise bird, since there was nothing else he could do.

The bird said, "I will tell you the meaning of the dream provided you promise to give me half of the reward you receive from the king." Ivan gladly agreed.

The bird explained, "The dream means, there is violence in the atmosphere. The dagger is the symbol of violence, the palace is the symbol of the kingdom; the dome is the symbol of the head of the kingdom, the king. The kingdom and the king are surrounded by enemies who are plotting to let loose violence. The king should always be on his guard."

Ivan met the king after a few hours and explained the dream to his full satisfaction. The king gave him

a large sum of money as reward.

Ivan, on his way to the village, again felt sad at the thought of parting with the bird's share of the reward. But if he did not give anything to the bird this time, perhaps the little creature would complain to the king. So, Ivan thought, he should do something to prevent such a possibility.

He picked up a rough stone and kept it ready in his fist.

When he was near the tree, the bird saw him and hopped down to a lower branch to talk to him. But Ivan promptly hurled the stone at the bird with the intention of killing it. The bird escaped, slightly hurt.

Ivan was worried, for, he had not succeeded in killing the bird. But he soon forgot about it.

A few years passed. One morning again the king's messenger called on Ivan and told him all about a strange dream the king had had the night before. This time he had dreamed of some beautiful snow-white lambs jumping up and down his palace. Ivan had been asked by the king to proceed to the palace as soon as he could. The king was eagerly looking forward to get an explanation from him.

Ivan did not know what to do. He expressed his reluctance to go to the palace. The messenger left him soon; but a few hours later the king's commander stood before him. The commander told him that if he had the audacity to disobey the king's command, he would be forthwith put to death. Ivan was panic-stricken. He promised to meet the king as early as possible, since there was no other go for him.

After the commander left, Ivan wept bitterly and cursed himself for his past conduct towards the bird. How could he show his face to the bird again? However, his repentance gave him some courage and early in the morning he stood under the tree in which the wise bird lived.

Soon the bird's voice was heard: "Has the king asked you to explain any new dream of his? What is it about?"

Ivan narrated the dream. The bird then said, "Will you give me half of the reward if I tell you the meaning of the dream?"

Ivan replied, "Believe me, O wonderful bird, I will give you all I get!"

The bird said, "The dream means, now the atmosphere is full of peace and innocence. The king has nothing to fear any more. Let him devote himself to nobler works, without any anxiety about anything."

Ivan thanked the bird and proceeded to meet the king. It was twilight when Ivan reached the palace. The king received him in the royal garden. Ivan explained the dream, this time too, to the king's full satisfaction. The happy king gave Ivan more money than ever.

This time Ivan galloped to the bird as fast as he could. When the bird saw Ivan and hopped down to a lower branch, Ivan said, "O kind wise bird, forgive me for my past conduct. I have bitterly wept for having deceived you. Here is all the money I have received from the king today. This is yours, entirely. Tomorrow I will bring here your share of what I had

received previously."

In a voice sweeter than ever, the bird said, "I don't blame you for your past conduct. The first time you were tempted to deceive me because deceit was in the atmosphere. The second time you were violent towards me because violence was in the atmosphere. Now you are faithful to me because there is innocence in the atmosphere. You are, like any ordinary man, ruled by the spirit which dominates the atmosphere. There are very few persons who are not influenced by it. You are obviously not one of those few; I never expected you to be one of them."

The bird flapped its wings and prepared to fly away. Ivan said, "But please do not forget to take all this money !"

The bird replied, "Well, what use could I have of your money ? I live on fruits and live in a nest. If I had needed money, I could have gone to the king and explained his dreams to him ! So, I wish you a happy and sensible life in spite of all your money. Goodbye !"*

MANOJ DAS

* From *Tales From Many Lands* by Manoj Das, published by India Book House, Bombay. Reproduced with the kind permission of the author and the publishers.